

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY INR/RNA/NE:AAVACCARO
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TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM

WARNING NOTICE SENSITIVE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED NOT
RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS--NOT RELEASABLE TO
CONTRACTORS OR CONTRACTOR/CONSULTANTS

1. LEBANON. LEFTIST LEADER JUMBLATT IS STILL DEFYING
SYRIA'S DEMAND FOR A CEASEFIRE DESPITE SIGNS THAT
THE LEFTIST DRIVE MAY BE LOSING MOMENTUM. HE NOW
SEEMS BENT AS MUCH ON PREVENTING THE RESUMPTION OF
SYRIAN MEDIATION AS SECURING PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S
RESIGNATION.

2. AFTER MEETING AGAIN WITH PLO HEAD YASIR ARAFAT ON
MARCH 31, JUMBLATT APPEALED TO LEFTIST SYMPATHIZERS
IN THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT TO PRESSURE PRESIDENT
ASAD TO LIFT SYRIA'S ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST THE
LEBANESE LEFTISTS. JUMBLATT ALSO REBUKED DAMASCUS
FOR INTRODUCING REGULAR TROOPS INTO LEBANON AND
DECLARED THAT HE WELCOMED ANY MEDIATION "NOT DESIGNED
TO INTERFERE IN LEBANON'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS." HE
SINGLED OUT PRESIDENT SADAT'S PROPOSAL FOR ARAB

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LEAGUE MEDIATION, WHICH HE KNOWS SYRIA STRONGLY

OPPOSES. THE LEFTIST LEADER ALSO SEEMED TO ACCORD

CAUTIOUS APPROVAL TO THE ARRIVAL IN BEIRUT ON MARCH 31 OF AMBASSADOR L. DEAN BROWN AS PRESIDENT FORD'S SPECIAL EMISSARY.

3. ALTHOUGH JUMBLATT CONTINUES TO INSIST THAT FRANGIE AGREE TO STEP DOWN BEFORE A TRUCE IS CALLED, HE ALSO IS CONCERNED THAT THE CHRISTIANS NOT USE A TRUCE TO REARM AND WITH PREVENTING THE SYRIANS FROM DICTATING FRANGIE'S SUCCESSOR. HE APPARENTLY FEARS THAT THE SYRIANS INTEND TO THWART THE LEFTISTS' EFFORTS TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS FROM THE CHRISTIANS NOT CONTAINED IN THE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WORKED OUT BY FRANGIE AND ASAD IN MID-FEBRUARY.

4. ARAFAT CONTINUES TO BE UNDER INTENSE SYRIAN PRESSURE TO ARRANGE A TRUCE. THE SYRIANS SEEM RESIGNED TO WAITING A WHILE LONGER TO SEE WHETHER HE CAN CHANGE JUMBLATT'S MIND. THE LIKELIHOOD OF OPEN SYRIAN MILITARY INTERVENTION MAY BE FADING, IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY INDICATIONS OF UNUSUAL ACTIVITY BY EITHER SYRIA OR ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE TO A SYRIAN DEMARCHE, IN FACT, THE UK AND FRANCE HAVE NOW WEIGHED IN ALONG WITH THE US IN CAUTIONING THE SYRIANS NOT TO INTERVENE.

5. IN THE FIGHTING MEANWHILE, THE CHRISTIANS SLIGHTLY IMPROVED THEIR POSITIONS ON MARCH 31, ESPECIALLY IN THE MOUNTAINS EAST OF BEIRUT. IN THE CAPITAL, BATTLELINES ARE STATIC. (SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT)

6. ISRAEL. THE SITUATION IN THE NORTHERN ISRAELI DISTRICT OF GALILEE APPEARS TO BE EASING FOLLOWING THE VIOLENT CLASHES ON MARCH 30 BETWEEN ISRAELI ARAB YOUTHS AND ISRAELI TROOPS WHICH LEFT 6 ISRAELI ARABS DEAD, 70 WOUNDED, AND 260 ARRESTED. FUNERALS FOR THOSE KILLED, HOWEVER, COULD SPARK NEW DEMONSTRATIONS.

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7. REINFORCED ISRAELI POLICE AND MILITARY TROOPS CONTINUE TO PATROL THE STREETS OF SEVERAL GALILEE TOWNS, BUT THEY ARE UNDER STRICT ORDERS TO REFRAIN FROM FORCEFUL ACTION UNLESS RENEWED RIOTING PLACES THEM IN SEVERE PHYSICAL JEOPARDY.

8. THE RABIN GOVERNMENT EASILY SURVIVED A NON-CONFIDENCE MOTION ON MARCH 31 OVER ITS HANDLING OF THE

DISORDERS, WHICH HAD BEEN LODGED BY THE RAKAH COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE KNESSET. PRIME MINISTER RABIN AND RAKAH LEADERS EXCHANGED HARSH DENUNCIATIONS

AND CHARGES OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR HAVING PROVOKED THE GALILEE RIOTS DURING A STORMY KNESSET DEBATE. EDITORIALS IN BOTH CONSERVATIVE AND MIDDLE-OF-THE ROAD NEWSPAPERS HAVE CALLED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO REEXAMINE ITS POLICY OF DEALING WITH THE COUNTRY'S ARAB MINORITY. (CONFIDENTIAL)

9. EGYPT. EMBASSY CAIRO REPORTS RUMORS OF CIVIL DISTURBANCES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. IT IS UNABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE MANY OF THE RUMORS, BUT THINKS THAT REPORTS OF RIOTING LAST WEEKEND IN DAMIETTA IN THE NILE DELTA OVER THE STEADILY RISING COST OF LIVING MAY HAVE SOME VALIDITY. MORE-OVER, STUDENTS AT A CAIRO UNIVERSITY ARE STAGING THEIR THIRD STRIKE THIS YEAR AGAINST SCHOOL POLICIES.

10. THESE DEMONSTRATIONS DO NOT POSE AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO SADAT'S REGIME. THEY ARE, HOWEVER, SYMPTOMATIC OF THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS SADAT NOW FACES. CONSEQUENTLY, HE MUST MOLLIFY THE ARMY, THE UNDERPINNING OF HIS RULE; KEEP THE MASSES RELATIVELY CONTENT; AND PREVENT STUDENT AND OTHER ANTI-REGIME ELEMENTS FROM COALESCING IN OPPOSITION TO HIS ADMINISTRATION.

11. SADAT HAS, IN FACT, DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE ENERGY IN RECENT WEEKS TO PLACATING THE MILITARY, LONG A PRIVILEGED CLASS, BY ASSERTING THAT HE WILL DO
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EVERYTHING HE CAN TO OFFSET THE IMPACT ON EGYPT'S CREAKY MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT OF SOVIET REFUSAL TO PROVIDE NEW EQUIPMENT AND SPARE PARTS. ON THE CIVILIAN FRONT, HOWEVER, HIS MARCH 14 CALL FOR GREATER AUSTERITY OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS HAS PROVOKED RUMBLINGS FROM EGYPTIAN WORKERS ALREADY HARD PRESSED BY RAMPANT INFLATION.

12. EGYPT'S UNIVERSITIES HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN RALLYING POINTS FOR ANTI-REGIME ACTIVITY. SCHOOL AUTHORITIES REMAIN CONCERNED THAT LEFTIST AND NASSERIST ELEMENTS MIGHT UNTIE WITH THE RIGHTIST MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD TO FOMENT UNREST AMONG STUDENTS.

13. IF SADAT SHOULD DECIDE TO END GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES

FOR SUCH BASICS AS BREAD AND TEA, CIVIL DISTURBANCES
COULD BECOME MORE WIDESPREAD, WITH SERIOUS
IMPLICATIONS FOR HIS POSITION. HE REMAINS HESITANT,
THEREFORE, TO ADD TO THE BURDENS OF THE URBAN
POOR AND STRUGGLING MIDDLE CLASS THROUGH AUSTERITY

MEASURES. HE NEEDS, HOWEVER, GENEROUS INFUSIONS
OF FOREIGN AID TO ENABLE HIM TO REMAIN IN POWER
AND TO CONTINUE HIS NEGOTIATING STRATEGY. HENCE,
HIS CURRENT TRIP TO WESTERN EUROPE AND HIS EARLIER
VISIT TO THE ARABIAN PENINSULA TO TAP ALTERNATIVE
SOURCES OF FUNDS. (SECRET)

14. THE SOVIET NEWS AGENCY TASS REPORTS THAT A SOVIET
GOVERNMENT STATEMENT REGARDING SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RE-
LATIONS WAS GIVEN TO AN EGYPTIAN OFFICIAL BY THE
SOVIET EMBASSY IN CAIRO ON MARCH 31 IT WAS
AVAILABLE ONLY AS A TASS SUMMARY. THE STATEMENT
WAS STRONGLY CRITICAL OF SADAT'S RECENT ANTI-SOVIET
ACTIONS AND WARNED THAT THOSE WHO "PRETEND" THAT ABRO-
GATION OF THE FRIENDSHIP TREATY WILL NOT AFFECT
BILATERAL RELATIONS OR THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION ARE
"VERY DISTANT FROM REALITY." (UNCLASSIFIED)

15. JORDAN. THE GOVERNMENT IS REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING
A FORMAL PROTEST TO EGYPT OVER THE UNAUTHORIZED
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DISTRIBUTION TO THE PRESS IN AMMAN OF A LEAFLET
SIGNED BY EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMI. THE
LEAFLET STATED EGYPT'S FULL SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE
OF THE WEST BANK IN THEIR DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST
ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND CATEGORICALLY REAFFIRMED THE
EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIAN
CAUSE. (SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT)

16. PLO. A PLO REPRESENTATIVE REPORTEDLY IS SCHEDULED
TO ARRIVE IN MEXICO CITY SOON TO ESTABLISH A
PLO INFORMATION OFFICE THERE. (SECRET/NOFORN) KISSINGER

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